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REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 6-12 and 15-28 are pending in the presently pending application.

Claims 1-3, 6, 7, 10-12, 15, and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U. S. Patent No. 6,260,029 ("Critelli") in view of U.S. Published Appln. No. 2001/0020228 ("Cantu") and U.S. Patent No. 5,331,118 to Jensen ("Jensen").

The Examiner has introduced the new reference to Jensen in order to address the limitation that the information of the barcode relating to the physical characteristics of the security envelope "include at least one of: (a) the date the security envelope was sealed; and (b) the size of the security envelope." The Examiner believes that Jensen teaches a barcode that includes information pertaining to the size of the envelope.

Applicants disagree. Jensen describes a system that determines the size of a package 21. The package 21 is moved on a conveyor 30 to coded measuring strips 16 and 18. Column 4, lines 41-44. The strips 16, 18 are not part of the package 21, but are instead two thin elongated regions of the Jensen conveyor system. The strips are perpendicular to each other. The strip 16 is horizontally disposed on the conveyor system, and the strip 18 extends vertically from the rightmost end of the strip 16. Bar codes are on both the strips 16, 18. As the package 18 is moved onto the region with the strips 16, 18, its rightmost edge (when looked at in the direction of package transport) is flush against the vertical strip 18, so that its lower right corner fits into the corner formed by the junction of the strips 16, 18. When the package 21 is positioned in this manner, the Jensen system is able to measure the width and height of the package. The height is

measured by decoding the lowermost bar code of strip 18 that is uncovered by the package 21; the width is similarly measured by decoding the rightmost bar code that is uncovered by the package. Column 6, lines 7-12.

As Jensen admits, the strips 16, 18 “function as machine-readable rulers” for measuring the dimensions of the package 21. Column 4, lines 47-48. The strips 16, 18 are not part of the package or of any indicia that can be affixed to the package. Moreover, once the dimensions of the package have been measured, that information (along with the length – determined through other means) is used to calculate the volume of the package 21, and the volume is included in a shipping manifest that is either printed as a hard copy or sent electronically to a remote system. Column 5, lines 56-63. Thus, Jensen teaches using a machine-readable ruler to determine the dimensions of a package and using that information to calculate the volume of the package. Even though Jensen teaches the inclusion of the volume information in a shipping manifest that may take the form of a hard copy, Jensen does not teach encoding any of these dimensions in a bar code that is affixable to the package 21. The bar codes in Jensen are on the strips 16, 18 that are used to measure the dimensions of a package. They work like rulers, and the coding on them is intended to automate the measurement of the package dimensions. The automation of dimensional measurement is different in purpose than the use of bar code tags to allow a representation of an envelope’s size to travel with the envelope wherever it goes. One of ordinary skill in the art thus would have no reason to apply the teachings of Jensen to Critelli or Cantu. Another reason is that Jensen applies to packages that have substantial widths and heights, like a typical six-sided box. A flat envelope is not suited for the Jensen invention because it has a small volume relative to a box that renders the Jensen system irrelevant. Thus, it

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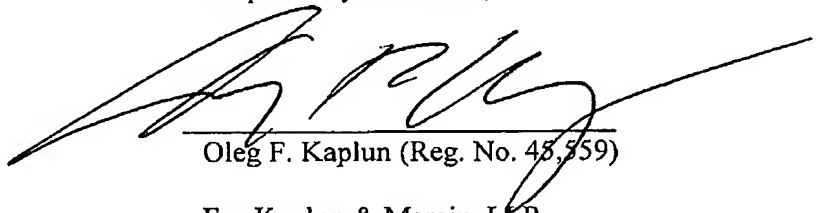
is incorrect for the Examiner to state that "Jensen discloses...encoding the dimensions of an envelope into the barcode." Jensen does not encode any barcodes; instead, it uses a bar-coded ruler to measure dimensions of a cube-shaped package, not an envelope. In view of this discussion, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

As for the remaining rejections, Applicants submit that the claims of those rejections are patentable for at least the same reasons given above. Moreover, Applicants traverse each reliance by the Examiner on Official Notice and respectfully request that the Examiner replace such reliance with a specific reference.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner erred in not allowing the pending claims 1-3, 6-12 and 15-28 over the prior art of record. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner's rejections be withdrawn.

Respectfully submitted,

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